

The Ohio Teacher Incentive Fund

Ohio proposes a statewide system of rewarding teachers and school leaders for high levels of performance and solid achievement with competitive compensation and career opportunities. The Ohio Teacher Incentive Fund (OTIF) will provide opportunities for teacher development, differentiated leadership roles, and incentive pay.

Needs Assessment Results and General Information

Statewide, Ohio struggles with teacher retention. In a state attrition study, data suggest that from 2001-2007 the state lost almost 31 percent of teachers within 5 years. In all four of the urban districts that are participating in OTIF, the percent of students who received free and reduced-price lunch in 2006 was between 63.5 percent (Toledo) and 94.6 percent (Cleveland). The achievement gap in Ohio affects African-American children and economically disadvantaged students.

Background

OTIF has built on existing models, including the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) in Cincinnati and Columbus and the Toledo Review and Alternative Compensation System (TRACS). Cleveland has implemented the Promoting Educator Advancement in Cleveland (PEAC), which was rolled out in September 2007.

Under OTIF, state standards are being established for teacher and principal evaluation systems that (1) ensure that evaluations are fair, credible and evidence-based, include multiple measures of performance in both knowledge and skills, and are linked to student academic progress; (2) align with Ohio's teacher and principal standards; and (3) suggest professional

development to enhance future performance in areas that are not meeting expectations. These standards will then serve as benchmarks for the design, development, and implementation of evaluation and compensation systems in districts across the state. Principal evaluation guidelines have been created and are being piloted in our four OTIF districts, as well as in nine other districts.

The OPES II will be expanded to 30 districts and will include training modules and a 2-year commitment to the project. We are just beginning to examine a teacher evaluation framework. Its developmental process will follow that used for the OPES.

Incentives

In TAP schools, teachers are compensated for their teaching skills, additional responsibilities, and student learning. In the TRACS system, teachers are rewarded when they (1) collaboratively succeed in significantly raising student achievement; (2) assume additional curriculum, instructional, and school improvement responsibilities and leadership; and (3) volunteer for placement in difficult teaching assignments and demonstrate improved results in student achievement.

TAP in Cincinnati and Columbus provides awards from a pool created annually: \$2,000 per educator to provide performance payouts based on demonstrated knowledge and skills. Under TRACS-B/CTIS-B, incentives for teachers

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| LOCATION(S) | Cincinnati, Columbus, Toledo, Cleveland, Ohio |
| AWARD DATE | November 2006 |
| DURATION | 5 years |
| PARTNERS | Ohio Department of Education; Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus and Toledo city schools; and the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching |

and administrators tied to school performance include as much as \$2,000 for meeting annual improvement goals (see Evaluation below). In Toledo, teachers and administrators may earn \$2,000 if three of three goals are met and \$1,000 if two of three goals are met. In the PEAC program, all three goals needed to be met to be awarded an incentive. These amounts and goals are negotiated annually by each of the district's governing board. The teacher performance element of TRACS-C/CTIS-C provides a career ladder for teachers in three-status levels: career, accomplished, and distinguished. Incentives range from 5 to 15 percent of salary as teachers move up the ladder in Toledo/TRACS PEAC C teachers will receive \$2,500 to \$5,000 for their work, which will depend on the project/level the teacher chooses.

Evaluation

Under TAP, teachers are observed as often as six times each year by several trained and certified evaluators. As part of the evaluation, the value-added gains the teacher produces, plus the school achievement gains from 1 year to the next, are incorporated. TRACS and PEAC support and enhance the continuous improvement process in which districts must set two academic and one related improvement goal (e.g., school attendance, graduation rate). Academic growth is measured by the percentage gains on the Ohio Performance Index or by meeting an increase in the number and percentage of Ohio grade card indicators achieved. Also, TRACS uses performance-based evaluation rubrics based on the national standards of effective instruction, as well as Danielson's "Framework for Teaching." The TRACS assessment system includes peer ratings, classroom observations, assessment of written communication skills, and a standards-based portfolio. In Cleveland, PEAC has a very similar system in place, and recently the First 93 were identified during the initial qualification year. Ohio's external TIF evaluator is Westat, and it has recently completed its Year 2 external evaluation. In addition, Westat has completed the first of two policy briefs on the project.

Resources

State general revenue and Title II funds will provide matching funds for OTIF. The goal is to help districts become self sustaining. Each year of the grant requires the participating districts to pick up a larger share of the funds.

Data Systems

The Ohio Assessment System aligns with state academic content standards for grades 3 to 8 in reading and math and with the Ohio Graduation Test for high school students. Value-added growth for all schools, a component of the state accountability system, will be included on the 2007-08 state and local report cards. Other short-term assessment systems are in place in the OTIF partnering districts. Data from various existing data management systems will be used to determine teacher and principal effectiveness for incentive eligibility.

Year 2 Activities

In the almost 2 years since ODE received the Federal grant, a great deal of work has occurred in the individual districts. Columbus and Cincinnati have now implemented TAP in a total of 12 schools. Ohio held its first Teacher Summer Institute, which was attended by over 100 Ohio educators plus individuals from other states. The two districts are providing ongoing weekly professional development, exposing teachers to instruments that will be used to evaluate their teaching. The districts also have focused on best practice and the examination of student data to drive instruction. Toledo and Cleveland have made good progress in implementing their model programs. Nine more teachers qualified to be TRACS C teachers. In the TRACS B segment of the Toledo Plan, 22 buildings reached either two or all three of the goals that were set by the district's governing board. Almost 600 teachers and administrators will receive incentive awards for this school year. In Cleveland, over 130

teachers participated in the qualifying year for PEAC C. Of that number 93 will become PEAC C-1 teachers. In the PEAC B part of the incentive plan, 300 teachers in nine buildings will qualify for an incentive payment for accomplishing three school goals also set by their district's governing board.

Ohio hosted its first Summit on January 24. This Summit was attended by more than 120 educators representing state teachers' unions, education professional associations, senior staff from the Ohio Department of Education, superintendents from the OTIF districts, district union presidents, and principals and teachers. The Summit was deemed a success and was addressed by both Brad Jupp of Denver and Dr. Susan Zelman, Superintendent of Public Instruction in Ohio. At the all-day Summit, participants heard in-depth presentations on the various OTIF models. Dr. Zelman's speech emphasized the fact that this is truly groundbreaking work. A panel discussion with union leaders and senior district administrators addressed how each district worked collaboratively to establish culture and conditions to support the tenants of OTIF.

Outlook for Year 3

Ohio is hosting its second Summit and will continue to empower teachers as leaders and unpack systems reform and funding sources. We are working on a web presence and on improving the depth of each district's communication plan. Ohio continues to be the focus of a study that is being sponsored by the Joyce Foundation. The first "brief" was completed in January, and the second, a more lengthy piece, should be completed by December. A brochure is also being produced for use on a wider scale. We are also beginning work on a framework for a "teacher growth model." The Ohio Principal Evaluation System process is in the second phase; a training manual has been written and a larger pilot including 30 districts will kick off in November. This will represent extensive training and a 2-year commitment by districts.